

REMARKS

The application has been amended and is believed to be in condition for allowance.

There are no outstanding formal matters.

The claims have been amended to more clearly recite the invention. No new matter is entered by way of these amendments.

In reviewing the prosecution to date, it seems the invention has been misunderstood. Indeed, the prior art having been cited directly concerns flight reservation requests, i.e., return of flight solutions in response to reservation requests. In contrast, the invention concerns the storage and the access for other data.

These data are details about the service information proposed in connection with one of a plurality of flights. Examples are given in published application beginning at paragraph [0055], i.e., the numbers of the loading terminals, [0057] information concerning traffic restrictions, rules relating to the distribution of tickets by the Internet, rules relating to meal service, and the types of classes of reservation which are recognized. The data returned to the user are not the flights themselves but information related to flights, as illustrate in these examples. The content of the rules recited in the claims corresponds to this type of information.

Claims have been added to specifying recite this service information. No new matter is entered by way of these new claims.

In summary, the claims are not directed to processing of reservation requests but rather to the processing (storage or access) of specific data (information such as the examples given above). Usually, the user of the invention is not a traveler but an administrator who has to create or update this kind of information. This is illustrated in paragraphs [0001] to [0009].

Before turning to the claims, consider an example of a type of information related to meal service in the flights of an airline and assume that some part of this information has to be modified (for example, meal service is no longer supported for flights between certain European origins and European destinations). Prior to the invention, the administrator had to modify the data flight by flight which is time consuming. This is because service information is presently organized by flight number. The administrator has to access the data sequentially, one flight after another and then modify the meal service information for each flight.

In contrast, the present invention organizes the data related to this meal service information differently. In this perspective, rules are created. For each rule, criteria define the application domain of the rule (i.e., the flight(s) to which the rule is applicable) and a content provide the data related to the service information which is concerned.

Accordingly, if the administrator wishes to suppress meal service for Europe internal flights, the administrator will update the corresponding rule(s). The input that is needed is

not a flight number but criteria comprising market definitions (origin and destination).

The invention provides a method that is closed to the business logic and enables modifications of information applicable to groups of flights rather than requiring modifications to be made sequentially for each flight.

Of course, this approach is neither in the prior art or obvious in view of what is in the prior art. Even if it is known for a traveler to access basic flight identification information by entering origin/destination criteria, it has never been suggested for an administrator to access to this different service information in such a way. This new and non-obvious approach is therefore believed to be both novel and non-obvious.

The Prior Art Rejections

Claims 11-12 are rejected as anticipated by FALTINGS 2003/0033164.

These claims have been cancelled and the rejection is therefore moot.

Claims 13-16 and 18-19 are rejected as obvious over FALTINGS in view of MOGLER 2003/0110062.

Claims 17 and 20-21 are rejected as obvious in further view of WINTER 2001/0007088.

The Official Action (page 4) states that FALTINGS and MOGLER are in the same field of endeavor, i.e., computer reservation systems. However, FALTINGS and MOGLER address different technical objectives; FALTINGS and MOGLER do not teach,

suggest or motivate the use of criteria based on geographical zones using different precisions; and FALTINGS and MOGLER do not teach, suggest or motivate the prioritization of rules by market pair definitions.

Technical Objectives

FALTINGS concerns a classical system for placing reservation requests and only an improved user interface is presented. Reservation requests comprise criteria such as origin and destination airports and the system returns a plurality of flight propositions. FALTINGS aims at presenting the propositions in a graphical manner but it uses classical data in a classical way for making travel reservations.

MOGLER teaches a reservation system with some features for managing a plurality of contracts between travelers (often corporate travelers) and airlines.

The goal of MOGLER is to optimize the management of the contracts and to enable the traveler to select the flight that provides with the highest discount for the company which employs him. For making the reservation request, the system disclosed by MOGLER is classical and simply uses standard criteria as input (segments defined by origin and destination airports notably) to return standard data of flight definitions matching the request. The only characteristics of MOGLER are the features for managing the contracts with airlines.

The present invention is not related to a graphical user interface as disclosed in FALTINGS nor to a contract

management system as taught in MOGLER. In addition the invention aims at processing specific data which are service information. Service information may be meal service, boarding terminal numbers, traffic restrictions information or other information as described in the application. The invention enables to store or access such types of information on the basis of search criteria comprising market pair's definition (origin market, destination market).

FALTINGS teaches entering criteria such as a market of origin (airport) and a market of destination (airport) but for searching flights (see paragraph 33) and not for accessing service information data.

MOGLER discloses the same kind of system as FALTINGS. A reservation request comprises a city pair and the booking system returns flights matching the criteria (see paragraph 40).

Even if FALTINGS and MOGLER disclose city pairs (origin and destination airports) as criteria for processing a request, they do not teach using these criteria for a request related to service information but only for requests relating to flights.

There is no direct link in MOGLER and FALTINGS between origin and destination markets and the data of service information. For example, if a user (like an administrator) would like to access meal service information for flights between New York and Dallas airports, he would search for all flights between these airports and, after reception of these flight data,

he would access to the meal service information of each of the flights sequentially.

This is obviously time consuming and not in line with business logic.

In contrast, the invention enables a direct access to such meal service information on the basis of origin and destination criteria.

In summary, MOGLER and FALTINGS do not return the same kind of data on the basis of criteria comprising origin and destination markets. This is because they fail to disclose the rules built according to the invention, said rules comprising criteria (with market pair definition) and a content which is not a flight identification but another type of data-service information. Such type of data has never been processed (stored or accessed) in the way of the invention.

MOGLER and FALTINGS also reflect that it exists a prejudice in the prior art as to the use of origin and destination data (airport pairs) only for returning flights in the context of reservation requests.

Geographical Zones Using Different Precisions

The invention as claimed (see claim 13) comprises the use of origin and destination markets being geographical zones of different types; it can be airports, cities, states and countries, countries, geographical region, or the world.

It is understood that such geographical zone definition enables to optimize the access to service information data, depending on the use case.

FALTINGS discloses geographical zones in the form of airports of origin and destination. See paragraph 33. FALTINGS fails to disclose any other type of geographical zones. This is because the reservation system of FALTINGS is standard and needs city airports as input of the requests.

MOGLER is very similar to FALTINGS from this standpoint because the reservation system it discloses is a standard one too. All flight data are sorted by airport pairs (see paragraph 40: . . . *when making travel reservations, a corporate traveler 6 generally engages a booking system 15, ... to reserve a flight between a particular city pair (e.g. EWR and ORD) ...*".

This involves limitations as to the flexibility of the process of the data.

Assuming that a user (administrator) wants to modify meal service information for all flights between airports located in the USA, first FALTINGS and MOGLER are not adapted to this process because they do not disclose handling such type of information. Further the user would have to process all city airport combinations (O/D combination) to identify all the impacted flights and then to access to the meal service data to modify.

According to the invention, the user only has to create (or to access) a rule having the appropriate content for the meal

service and to define the criteria of the rule with the following market pairs: origin = USA, destination = USA.

Prioritization Of Rules By Market Pair Definitions

The priority assigned to each geographical zone is the consequence of the feature discussed in the immediately above section.

Each type of geographical zone has a priority which depends on its precision. As no different type of zones is disclosed in FALTINGS and MOGLER, no prioritization of the zone type is described in these two references.

In the Advisory Action, the Examiner stated that MOGLER teaches geographical zones with corresponding priority ranks (in figure 4 elements # 301, #302, #312).

The applicant disagrees. Priority ranks are actually presented in MOGLER but the priorities are assigned to airlines depending on the contracts between corporations and airlines. For example, for a given itinerary (between two cities), the optimal airline is assigned a priority rank of 1 which reflects that this airline is the most performing from a financial standpoint. Figure 4 of MOGLER does not show any other geographical zone type than cities and there is no priority allocated to the geographical zone.

To summarize, in MOGLER, the airlines are sorted by priority rank for each city pair whereas the invention as claimed

provides with a table of different geographical zones which are prioritized.

This difference is also illustrated by MOGLER's description. See paragraph 41: "*As shown, if the contract threshold has not been reached with a high-priority airline, the message displayed will indicate to the travel counselor 7 that a particular airline is a high priority...*".

In summary, there is no equivalence between the priority disclosed by MOGLER and the priority of the invention.

Applicants' previous remarks remain relevant but, as they are already of record, are not repeated here in the interest of brevity.

Summary

In that the prior art does not teach or suggest the combination of claimed features, all the claims are believed allowable. Reconsideration and allowance of all the claims is therefore solicited.

Should there be any matters that need to be resolved in the present application; the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any

overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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